

What's past is prologue!
Shakespeare

February 1999
Issue 9

For Army Newspapers



Post-30

Information Strategy Division,
Office, Chief of Public Affairs, Department of the Army

The Role of Army Newspapers

The Start Of The Army Newspaper Modernization Program



Army Newspapers from the 1960s: Fort Belvoir CASTLE, a full-size newspaper, top in panel; Fort Eustis WHEEL, a tabloid, bottom in panel; Alaska's YUKON SENTINEL, a tabloid (above left), and the Fort Lee's TRAVELLER, a full-size newspaper.

Impressions/Expressions

By Sgt. Maj. Gary G. Beylickjian (USA-Ret.)

Division Name Change at OCPA, DA

Command Information and Products Division, OCPA, has just undergone another name change. Effective Feb. 1, it became the Information Strategy Division. Since the late 1940s, the Army's internal information agency at DA has undergone several name changes including Troop Information and Education, Command Information Division, and most recently, the Command Information and Products Division.

ARNEWS Feedback

Our thanks to the many editors and CI people who responded to our request for feedback on ARNEWS.

Since 1974, when Army News Features (ANF) and Army News Photo Features were combined and restructured as ARNEWS, periodic surveys had gone to Army editors to muster their thoughts about ARNEWS' performance. ARNEWS came about because of such surveys conducted during the early 1970s. The consensus among most editors then was that ANF was not providing news affecting the target audience. ANF had no beat system at the Pentagon, most soldiers turned to other news publications for needed information. Because of the lack of soldier oriented news, usage slipped.

After the change in format (8x10-typed sheets under a letterhead), establishment of a Pentagon beat system and weekly distribution, usage rose. Today, ARNEWS still has a vigorous Pentagon beat system and it's fully electronic and swiftly dispatched to editors, thanks to Gary Sheftick, its Director and his staff: Gerry Gilmore, Sgt. 1st Class Connie Dickey, writers and Sgt. 1st Class Kevin Robinson, contributor, and Army Newspaper Chief.

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Response to Queries

I've received several queries from Army editors concerning several areas of Army newspapers. Several have asked about critiques. Several newspapers have already received reviews, most rate a 2 or 3; 1 being the highest. A few nearly hit bottom with 4s.

The evaluation is meant to be constructive and not destructive criticism. The reviews are from a disinterested, not an uninterested point of view.

Is every issue of every newspaper reviewed? Yes! In fact, I not only try to read, but sometimes I'll scan every story in every issue. I keep notes of outstanding leads and of articles worthy of a "pat on the back" and possible content analysis. A pattern I started back in the 1950s.

Will Post-30- be produced every two weeks? I've considered that many times. It may just happen one of these months. I have had no feedback on this subject.

Newspaper Workshop May 9 to 14

I'll keep mentioning the workshop until it's over. The next get-together will be in Alexandria, Va., from May 9 to 14. To get a reservation call Sgt. 1st Class Kevin Robinson at OCPA. His commercial telephone number is 703-695-3952; the DSN is 225-3952. This will be a great opportunity for us to meet and talk shop.

The buzz on PA Link's Forum

Someone has come up with a prediction that newspapers may fade from the scene perhaps as soon as 10 years, maybe 20.

Why do we fall for these predictions. Newspapers will change, several have had facelifts, the WASHINGTON POST for one. The Post has begun running page-one photos in color. And, there are other design changes.

Evidently the POST and its brethren, the CHICAGO TRIBUNE, LA TIMES, NY TIMES, ATLANTA CONSTITUTION, ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH, BOSTON GLOBE and others feel confident they'll be around for some time. They're going strong and so too are hundreds of other city and town newspapers which have made or soon plan on making their publications visually reader-friendly.

The Internet has some pluses going for it: classifieds ads and archival stories are already on web pages. But, rare is a reader who carries his laptop with even the hope of logging on for all the news. He or she may read an abbreviated version of the top stories, but getting all the news will take some doing. For now anyway!

The Army Newspaper Modernization Program

By Sgt. Maj. Gary G. Beylickjian

(Portions of the following narrative are in the first person.)

The newspapers shown on the cover of this Post-30- and on several pages that follow are just a few of the 500 newspapers which served the Army and its wide readership base up to 1971. Most followed the accepted layout formats. Full-size newspapers used the Contrast, Focus, Quadrant, Balanced, Horizontal, Panel, Brace, and at times Circus layouts. These were general patterns used in civilian large newspapers, erroneously referred to “metros.”

Writing was considered acceptable, although a bit stilted and sprinkled with bureaucratic icing. The majority of civilian and military staff members had journalism backgrounds either from civilian schools or Army Information School, later DINFOS. The draft continued to provide the Army’s journalism pool with experienced and semi-experienced writers and graphic artists. The fact that much of the writing smacked of “house organ” journalism was not the fault of the writers, but the reflection of the organization.

Army tabloids mirrored their larger counterparts. Post and unit tabloids shied from using the so-called “sensational” layouts common in big-city newspaper tabloids. Newsletter-size publications, of which there were many, generally adopted a looser approach to design. One large illustration or an article or two on the cover. A small handful of magazines appeared on the roster.

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The mission of Army newspapers was still to enhance esprit and maintain high morale. But, the substance of Army newspapers had changed during the early 1960s, and in a few years it was noticeably slanted. The question was asked more than once: for whom is the newspaper for? It had become obvious that it wasn't for the so-called, across-the-board rank and file, but merely for the rank—the officer rank. At a time when the enlisted sought channels to voice their concerns amidst civil demonstrations and to seek help, the channel they looked to, the newspaper—looked the other way.

I don't care about the enlisted who do not read my newspaper, I'm concerned about the officers who do. (A post PAO)



The words in the sandwich above were uttered to my face by a post Information Officer (a position now known as a Public Affairs Officer). During a content analysis I conducted of that PAOs newspaper, I recorded references to officers 975 times in five randomly selected issues. Enlisted were mentioned 170 times on a post of 15,000 troops. He didn't like my evaluation of his newspaper and when we met, expressed his true feelings about Army newspapers. It was unfortunate!

In 1965, while assigned to US Army Europe and Seventh Army, Germany, as chief of the command's 150-plus newspapers, I frequently suggested soldier-related topics that should be covered: rip-offs, housing problems, racial conflicts all common problems in Germany. Editors, for the most part, acknowledged the importance of these and other subjects. Only a few were willing to "rock the boat."

During many frank and open talks with Col. Louis Berault, then USAREUR PAO, on the topic of relevant issues which he agreed were necessary, I mentioned a word that would become my catchword for the next decade. It was a word I never thought could or would apply to Army newspapers. Perhaps I was overly drenched in my devotion and loyalty to Army journalism. The word was **CREDIBILITY!**

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(Photos at left: Top to bottom: Fort Bliss MONITOR, MDW's FORT MYER POST and Okinawa's RYUKYAN REVIEW, during the late 1960s.)

By 1970, readership of Army newspapers dipped to nearly 45 percent in an Army four times the size of today's Army. Unofficial random newspaper surveys revealed responses such as "nothing in it for me," "it's the commander's glory sheet," or "the content is sanitized" all referring to content.

In many units, day rooms were stacked with banded newspapers, unopened and unread. When pointedly asked, many soldiers spoke disparagingly of their unit newspaper.

The annual World-wide Information Conference, held the winter of 1970 in Washington, D.C. Addressed these and other newspaper problems. Maj. Joseph Burlas Jr., a member of the Office, Chief of Information, DA (OCINFO, now OCPA) addressed the Information Officers. Here is part of what he said about Army newspapers:

"The sad fact is that Army newspapers for the most part are not hitting target audiences—young soldiers between the ages 17 and 26. Without doubt, we have a big following in the ladies club group and among the brass in the head shed—provided we spell all names correctly and use plenty of fashion show, tea party, awards photos and of course flattering pictures of the big man.

"With few exceptions, our unit newspapers lack credibility with the young soldier because he feels that the news is sanitized. The emphasis is on senior officers and the paper scrupulously avoids any reference to issues relevant to the young soldier and any topic which is in the least way controversial.

"For years we have expounded the virtues of better editing, feature stories about soldiers, and emphasis on promotions, career opportunity and unit accomplishments. We have done an acceptable job along these lines; however, our newspapers still are not meeting the needs of young soldiers."

The conference concluded changes were needed, and they were to begin. I was at USCONARC at Fort Monroe, Va, assigned as chief of the command's 200-plus newspapers. I was involved in a vigorous critique program, conducting newspaper workshops and publishing Post-30-. I was now in my fourth major command heading each command's newspapers. This assignment would be very quite different.

In January 1971, Maj. Burlas notified me that USCONARC would conduct a six-month test program to modernize 30 of its post and unit newspapers. I would head the project, monitoring, guiding and supervising the pilot program. (continued on page 7)

(Newspapers top to bottom: Fort Sill's CANNONEER, the SCREAMING EAGLE in Vietnam and V Corps' GUARDIAN in Germany during the mid to late 1960s.)



Up to January 1971, my critique schedule was five newspapers daily, five days weekly. Critiques now would increase to 10 daily, five days weekly to ensure each issue of each paper in the pilot program was reviewed.

Army newspapers in the pilot program included: Fort Belvoir CASTLE, FORT MYER POST, PENTAGRAM NEWS, Fort Knox INSIDE THE TURRET, Fort Jackson LEADER, Fort McClellan NEWS, Fort Gordon RAMBLER, Fort Devens DISTACH, Fort Bragg PARAGLIDE, Fort Dix POST, Fort Sheridan TOWER, Fort Campbell COURIER, Fort Sam Houston NEWS-LEADER, Fort Rucker ARMY FLIER, Fort Leonard Wood GUIDON, Fort Carson MOUNTAINEER, Fort Wolters TRUMPET, Fort Hood ARMORED SENTINEL, Fort Ord PANORAMA, Fort Lewis RANGER, Fort Huachuca SCOUT, Fort Sill CANNONEER, White Sands MISSILE RANGER and a dozen newsletter publications (names of the original participants listed).

The pilot program involved hours of daily telephone conversations with editors often laying out pages over the phone and answering questions on what controversial topic was acceptable. My response was always any issue which touched soldiers was acceptable. As for language, no banalities.

In makeup, the first step was to makeover from old formats. Full-size papers went from eight and nine columns to five. Column widths increased from 9 to 12 picas to 14 and 18. Column rules and cutoff rules were dropped and alleys widened. Type increased from 8 on 8.5 to 9 on 9.5 or 10. Many newspapers were told to use bolder typefaces. Headlines were set larger, so too were illustrations. Most outline type was reset. Where possible, white space increased. Double-trucks used large photos, of varying sizes, with a single focal point and plenty of white space. The Fort Belvoir CASTLE went tabloid. The FORT MYER POST became the MDW POST. Nameplates were redesigned, changed and even renamed.

A handful of newspapers delved into so-called controversial issues, among the first was the MDW POST, CASTLE, INSIDE THE TURRET, and PANORAMA. Other newspapers focused on graphics first, content later. There were times when a controversial issue would be discussed over the phone as it was being typewritten. 2nd Lt. Dave Reynolds, editor of the CASTLE, began writing stories that caused raised eyebrows and aroused anger. But, he had the complete support of his commanding general and the pilot program. Reynolds would, a few years later, become the Army's only editor to be tagged as an "advocacy journalist."



The before and after of two USCONARC newspapers used in the 1971 pilot program. The old full-size CASTLE, left, and the modernized tabloid CASTLE, second from left. The old FORT MYER POST, second from right, converted to the MDW POST, right.

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(More about the newspapers on the previous page: The modernized CASTLE cover shows a boot pressing down on the letters "MVA." MVA stood for Modern Volunteer Army. The MVA concept was also known as "VOLAR," Volunteer Army. Both the MDW POST and CASTLE used a tabloid layout I pushed a decade before and continued to push into the late 1970s. I called it Single Theme Development. Many tabloids and a few full-size newspapers used it. I'll have more on this design package in future Post-30-s.)

In June 1971, after screening and compiling more than a 14-inche high stack of evaluations, critiques, commentaries and surveys of pilot program newspapers, I sent USCONARC's results to OCPA.

The following month, Army newspapers received the following message from Maj. Gen. Winant Sidle, Chief of Information, DA:

"During the 1970 World-wide Information Officers Conference, conceptual changes in the newspaper portion of the Army's Command Information Program were discussed. These changes were aimed at modernizing Army newspapers to make them more effective tools of commanders in communicating with their troops, particularly the young soldiers who comprise the bulk of our Army....

...The Army newspaper modernization program has been approved by the Chief of Staff on a permissive basis and is not directive in nature. The decision on modernization rests with the local commander responsible for publication."

The Army Newspaper Modernization Program was now on its way. It began July 1971.

OCA prepared Guidelines and Instructions for modernizing newspapers, underscoring the three areas that required improvements: writing, graphics and content. The guidelines encouraged an open and free-flowing use of words and phrases that the target audience could relate to, packaged in a modern, visually-oriented news container. As for content, open and frank discussion of "real-world issues" was encouraged, including letters to the editor editorials and commentaries. The move was away from conservative non-controversial topics to ones that had bearings on soldiers and families.

The Guidelines and Instructions gave no hint on how these could be or should be done. They left that door open to innovations, and many Army newspapers took aim and ran through the gates.

Through agreement between OCPA and USCONARC, I would now be responsible for critiquing all Army newspapers—all 500, in addition to monitoring and supervising the Army-wide modernization program. It was now a recognized program run by a senior enlisted man. It was a first!

The number of critiques had to be increased. USCONARC installed a telephone "hot line" solely for editors. It was a very busy line.

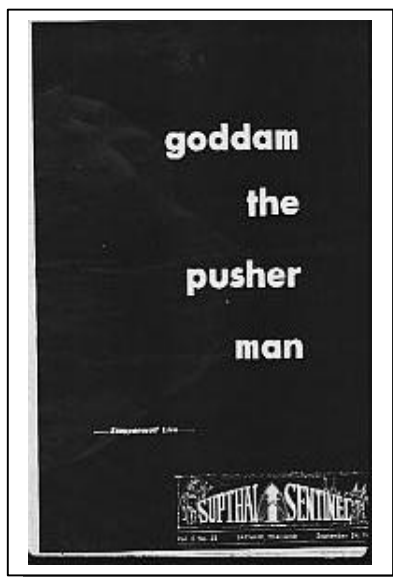
By late 1971, the first in a long series of Newspaper Workshops was held at Fort Meade, Maryland, hosted by OCPA, DINFOS and USCONARC. Instead of the anticipated 125-150 participants, nearly 300 showed. It was a happening, an awakening and the beginning.

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By the fall of 1971, several overseas newspapers made dramatic changes in their design and content, some tackling the so-called gut issues, using stateside Army newspapers as examples. Still others like the SUPTHAI SENTINEL, TORII, and YUKON SENTINEL (shown below) not only changed their design, but also tackled controversial issues with a vengeance. Newspapers in Germany would quickly follow.

When Thailand's SUPTHAI SENTINEL appeared, it raised many eyebrows and much concern. The concern was that many newspapers would go too far tackling gut issues. The calls about Sep. 24, 1971 issue of the SENTINEL—pro and con--were overwhelming. That issue of the SENTINEL would be and had to be an award-winner. And, it was. It won the 1971 Keith L. Ware and Thomas Jefferson Awards for Special Journalistic Achievement. Many voices were now silent.

(I'm going to jump to 1977 when I received a letter from the former Thailand PAO whose office produced the SUPTHAI SENTINEL. His letter is worthy of publication because it gives some insight as to how the SENTINEL's exceptional issue came about. The PAO responded to what I had written in another publication I produced, PRO TALK. PRO TALK was to be a means for discussing case studies involving Army newspapers and problems faced when covering and producing controversial and non-controversial issues.)



The words on the cover of the SUPTHAI SENTINEL came from the recording, Stephenwolf Live. Credit appears above, left of the newspaper's nameplate. The issue won 1971 Keith L. Ware and Thomas Jefferson awards for Special Journalist Achievement. The issue created a stir, yet reaped admiration and accolades galore. The TORII produced outstanding features and won numerous OCPA "J" Awards for singular achievement. The YUKON SENTINEL was in a class by itself. It's page-one layouts and content were examples used by many other Army newspapers. The YUKON SENTINEL was among the leaders of the pack, an award-winner.

(An unfortunate situation arose when the SUPTHAI SENTINEL received its KLV award for “goddam the pusher man.” The editor who produced the award winning issue did not receive recognition, and the editor who had no part in producing the issue did. When the KLV award was presented in Washington, D.C., the editor had departed Thailand. A new editor took his place and received recognition. In his letter to me, John R. Nordan, Jr., who was then PAO, wrote to insure proper credit. His letter contained much more however. It is dated Jan. 20, 1977.)

Dear SGM Beylickjian:

I read your first issue of “Pro Talk” with a great deal of interest. But, I feel compelled to set the record straight concerning the SUPTHAI SENTINEL’s award-winning issue on drug abuse, “goddam the pusher man.”

I am the PAO at SUPTHAI that you refer to in your article, but from there the facts have become distorted over the past five years.

Ist Lt. Robert Handeyside was the editor of that issue, not Warren Mann. It is true, however, that Warren went to DC to accept the award for SUPTHAI since he was the editor at the time of the award presentation. The September 24, 1971 issue was actually the inspiration of Handeyside, who was serving as editor after the departure of our regular editor. Handeyside DEROSed the next month—it was his swan song. Warren Mann was on the staff, by about two weeks as I recall—he was a clerk in AG prior to that....

The story goes something like this. Handeyside conceived the idea and worked on it for about a month with the help of a few others on the staff. When they brought the front page sketch to me, I had to soul-search a little and the ramifications of a radically different cover such as this certainly weighed heavily on my mind. When the staff had won me over, I went to the chaplain, not for his prayers, but for his reaction to the colloquialism “goddam” we proposed to use. He agreed that it would get attention and gave his blessings, provided we spelled it with a small “g.”

Convinced now that we weren’t going to be struck down by lightning, Rob Handeyside and I went to BG Vessey, the commander. After pleading our case, general Vessey gave his blessings. We went to press the next week and the reaction was astounding. We established unbelievable credibility with the troops and everyone was anxiously awaiting every issue thereafter....

...The dramatics you added to your description of the meeting with the CG were rightly placed. It was dramatic. But, most importantly, General Vessey’s reaction and decision were not uncharacteristic! General Vessey was deeply concerned with communicating with the soldiers of his command and looked upon his IO staff, and particularly the SENTINEL, as his best medium. Even after the September 24th issue, we continued to run controversial, but relevant and interesting subject matter. These subjects were well-researched and cleared with General Vessey beforehand. He used to tell me, “If that’s what it takes to grease the wheels of progress, then let’s do it!” General Vessey’s support before and after publication was the main reason for the SENTINEL’s success. His dealings with me and my staff are indicative of how a successful commander should deal with and relate to his PA staff—and General Vessey is certainly successful.

...I appreciate the fact that the outstanding job the SENTINEL staff did is still being recognized today. Thanks for your innovativeness, leadership and guidance, I think we went a long way in the 70s. As a DA civilian, I look forward to being part of the continued march of progress in Army public affairs in the future.

John R. Nordan, Jr.

(Note: General Vessey became the Allied Commander in Korea and went on to be Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. At the time of this letter Mr. Nordan was with the Marksmanship Unit at Fort Benning, GA.

Mr. Nordan underscores what has been repeatedly stated and overstated for decades, the commander’s support in the presentation and production of a soldier-oriented Army newspaper is vital. And equally vital is the rapport between the commander and the newspaper staff. His confidence in and respect for the staff invariably leads to an effective, military-targeted newspaper. The SUPTHAI SENTINEL was an outstanding example.)

"If we are to foster understanding we must be willing to enter into a dialogue with our youth. From experience, we have learned that a degree of rapport is established with youth when they are given facts rather than generalities. They respond when we exhibit some understanding of their problems. They appreciate it when we take time to offer rationale for our actions. We gain stature when we admit mistakes and offer frank answers."

Maj. Gen. Winant Sidle, Chief of Information, DA, Jan. 15 1971.

END NOTES

A year into the modernization program brought recognition from many sources. EDITOR AND PUBLISHER ran an article on the modernization program. So too did the STARS AND STRIPES and a host of civilian newspapers near Army posts, including the far-off HONOLULU ADVERTISER in Hawaii.

A number of universities were interested in the program. The University of California at Chico and the University of Missouri were among them. Several federal agencies inquired about the program including the Graduate School at the Department of Agriculture, and the departments of Labor and Commerce.

The program was given tremendous boost from the highly respected National Endowment for the Arts. Mr. Jerome Perlmutter, director of Publications, showered us with praise the agency's support over the years.

Writing took on contemporary language flavored with words such as "rap," "dap," "bummer," "truckin'," and "hazzle" which were common in commentaries, editorials and features.

One phrase that did not show up in print, but was uttered often by a small handful of Public Affairs Officers and senior enlisted: "We shouldn't air our dirty linen in public." It was for a short time the rallying cry of Public Affairs people dead against anything smacking of controversy or soldier-oriented topics. Soon the PAOs and senior enlisted would have change in attitude!

The next Post-30- will have more on the modernization program as well as the history of the Keith L. Ware, Paul Savanuck and the newly established Moss/Holland awards for civilian print journalists.

Keep on truckin'

Exceptionally Outstanding Contribution



SOUNDOFF (Fort Meade) for “Down For The Count,” story by Joe Burlas, photos by David Hobby, pub Jan. 14.

EAGLE (Fort Belvoir) for “10-Years After: Serial Rapist Gets His Due,” by Tim Hipps, pub Jan. 21.

ARMY FLIER (Fort Rucker) for “Veterans Of Past And Present Honored,” by Staci Sands, pub Nov. 13.



STANDARD (Fort Detrick) for the commentary “Can’t We Say Christmas,” by Noreen Vega, pub Dec. 10.

POINTER VIEW (West

INSIDE THE TURRET (Fort Knox) for the commentary “The Art Of Parking, Simple For Some, Apparently Damned Impossible For Others,” by Larry Barnes, pub Dec. 3.

MERCURY (Medical Command) for the commentary, "Keep The Warrior Spirit In Business Management," by Harry Noyes, pub in December issue.



APG NEWS (Aberdeen Proving Ground) for the page-one photo “Eagle Population Still Grows,” by Jim Pottie, pub Jan. 21.



LEADER (Fort Jackson) for “Code Talkers: How The Navajos Won The War,” by Spc. Theresa O’Hagan-Opsahl also “Great American Smoke Out, Exercise To Quit,” by PFC. Benjamin King, pub Nov. 19.

NORTHWEST GUARDIAN (Fort Lewis) for Native American History Traced To Early Days,” by Sgt. 1st Class Doug Strand also for “Frequently Asked Questions About Army Physical Conditioning,” by 2nd Lt. Frank Tucker, both pub Nov. 20.

STRIPE (Walter Reed) for “One Man’s Journey—From Navy Navigator To Army Veterinarian,” by Teal Ferguson, pub Nov. 13.

RECRUITER (US Army Recruiting Cmd.) for “Selling: Basics vs. Advanced,” by Sgt 1st Class Russ L. Fry,” pub November 1998.

REVELLEER (Idaho NG) for the photos in “Bosnia—Real World, Real Time,” by 1st Sgt. Ric Holmes, pub November 1998.

STRIPE (Walter Reed) for “The First Step Toward Solving Workplace Problems, by Teal Ferguson, pub Jan 8.

WHEEL (Fort Eustis) for the layout in “Shops Relocate As Part Of Exchange Renovation,” story /photos by Pfc. Melissa Stevens, pub Jan 14.



CASEMATE (Fort Monroe) for “Why Am I Broke—Understanding Bankruptcy,” pub Jan 8. (no byline).

FRONTLINE (Fort Stewart) for the column, “Porter’s Ponderings,” by Spc. Christopher Porter and also for the layout in “Fore!,” pub Jan. 14.

ESSAYONS (Fort Leonard Wood) for “Stopping The Violence,” by Pfc. Kim Brown and also for “Buddies And Blisters—Veterans Day Road March,” by Staff Sgt. Betty Thompson and Pfc. Kim Brown, pub Nov. 12.

HERALD POST (Germany) for “What’s The Scoop On Gangs?” a three-part series by Dave Hamilton, part one pub Jan. 14.

INSIDE THE TURRET (Fort Knox) for “Military Members And Dependents Not Immune To Marijuana Madness,” by Pfc. Tina Sosack, pub Jan. 7

Notable Leads from Army Newspapers

Ominous skies recalled somber memories of battle Tuesday afternoon at Veterans Park, the site of Fort Rucker's Veterans Day Ceremony. With dark clouds looming overhead, residents from Fort Rucker and the Wiregrass gathered to pay tribute to those who proudly and courageously served their country, not only in times of conflict, but also in times of peace.--*Staci Sands, Fort Rucker ARMY FLIER, Nov. 13, 1998.*

How would you like to go on an all-expense paid trip to our nation's capital courtesy of the Army? All it takes is a little heart, desire and the ability to run 10 miles really, really fast.--*Brian Murphy, Fort Hood SENTINEL, Aug. 20, 1998.*

Some airborne commanders would jump first to lead the way, but for Capt. Erin Dowd, jumping first has more to do with personal reasons, like hitting the ground within the hour.

At 5'2" and 104 pounds, Dowd tends to drift above the earth longer than the rest of her unit, hoping not to catch a quick wind that would lead her too far away from the landing zone.

But even with her small stature, "Capt. Dowd stands heads and shoulders above a lot of commanders," say members of her unit. And for a commander, these types of comments carry a lot more weight than the scale can register.--*Staff Sgt. Melanie R. Rowton, WILDCAT Winter 1998*

A "Road Closed" sign bars traffic from waves that pound over eroding asphalt. Telephone poles and skeletal trees sink beside a road that disappears into the lake. Water, once miles from farms and residences, now surrounds abandoned mailboxes and foundations. --*Peter Verstegen, ENGINEER UPDATE, December 1998*

They line up against the wall, one behind the other with mere inches between them. No words are spoken, as six soldiers move in unison, with weapons drawn and hearts pounding. The last soldier comes forward and, with a whoosh of air and a dull thud, sends the door flying open with a hand-held battering ram.--*Spc. Laurie Ayres, COURIER, Nov. 19, 1998*